

The Innovators: Entrepreneurs Earn Top Honors, Seed Dollars in N.H. Social Venture Innovation Challenge

Wednesday, December 17, 2014

⋮



Amano's mobile store solution will bring goods to those who lack easy access to traditional grocery stores. L to R: Matt Puckett, CFO of Timberland; winners Shannon and Bradley Calabro, and Fiona Wilson, an assistant professor at the UNH Paul College of Business and Economics.

Some of society's most pressing social and environmental challenges seemed much more solvable on Monday when aspiring entrepreneurs presented their proposals for innovative, business-oriented solutions in the final round of the New Hampshire Social Venture Innovation Challenge at UNH. Six teams earned cash prizes to help their get their ideas off the ground and into the marketplace.

A team of University of New Hampshire students who proposed to start a mobile grocery store to help address the issue of "food deserts" and a Portsmouth resident who wants to increase road safety and decrease pollution of the state's waterways won the second annual challenge at UNH earlier this week.

Designed to be an "innovation accelerator," participants in the N.H. Social Venture Innovation Challenge develop original proposals for sustainable, market-based solutions to societal challenges. There was a track for community members and another for students in any college or university in the state. Eight teams in each track were chosen to compete in the finals.

"We were thrilled that 158 individuals representing 71 teams of college students and community members were inspired to design entrepreneurial concepts to tackle major local and global challenges such as climate change, access to clean water, food access and food waste and community economic development," says Jan Nisbet, senior vice provost for research at UNH. "We know that effective solutions to society's most insidious problems will increasingly need to come from collaboration—across private and public sectors and across fields and disciplines—and this challenge not only encourages it but shows what it can accomplish."

The winning student team, Amano's Mobile Grocery Stores, proposed creating vehicle-based stores to operate in close proximity to homes, offices and community centers for people who do not have easy access to traditional grocery stores. Team members Bradley and Shannon Calabro, master's students in business and social work respectively, received a cash prize of \$5,000.

The second and third-place student winners were LiquiNet, a team of UNH engineering students looking to help developing countries manage water systems using remote sensing devices, and PeeBus, another team of UNH engineering students who proposed to remove urine from the wastewater stream and recycle it. They received prizes of \$3,000 and \$1,500 respectively. A team of environmental science and biology students from Colby-Sawyer College, aiming to address recycling problems in their native Nepal, received a special judge's prize. Timberland was a major supporter of the challenge and made the student track prizes possible.



Sensible Spreader will harness new technologies to help reduce environmental impacts associated with road care and maintenance. L to R: New Hampshire Charitable Foundation CFO Michael Wilson; Fiona Wilson of the UNH Paul College of Business and Economics, and community winner Andrew Jaccoma.

The winning community team, Andrew Jaccoma's Sensible Spreader Technologies, aims to increase road safety, reduce wasteful dissemination of deicers and lessen impact on the environment by integrating the latest technology into road maintenance equipment. Jaccoma received a first-place cash prize of \$10,000 as well as 100 hours of consulting donated by PixelMEDIA, a New Hampshire-based digital experience agency, and six months of membership in AlphaLoft, an organization dedicated to accelerating innovative start-up and early-stage companies. The cash prizes in the community track were made possible, in part, by the support of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation.

The second and third-place winners were Harvest to Market and BankLocal. They received cash prizes of \$5,000 and \$2,500 respectively.

The Social Venture Innovation Challenge is organized and hosted at UNH by the Peter T. Paul College of Business & Economics, the Carsey School of Public Policy, the Sustainability Institute, NH EPSCoR and Net Impact UNH. Yusi Turell, executive director of the UNH Center for Social Innovation and Finance, and Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics associate professor Fiona Wilson helped develop the challenge.

Learn more:

[N.H. Social Venture Innovation Challenge](#)

- WRITTEN BY:
[Tracey Bentley](#) | Communications and Public Affairs

INNOVATION



University of New Hampshire

UNH Today is produced for the UNH community and for friends of UNH.
The stories are written by the staff of [UNH Communications and Public Affairs](#).
Email us: unhtoday.editor@unh.edu.

[MANAGE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION](#) [CONTACT US](#)

Like us on Facebook

Follow us on Twitter

Follow us on YouTube

Follow us on Instagram

Find us on LinkIn

UNH Today RSS feeds

UNH Today • UNH Main Directory: 603-862-1234
Copyright © 2021 • TTY Users: 7-1-1 or 800-735-2964 (Relay NH)
[USNH Privacy Policies](#) • [USNH Terms of Use](#) • [ADA Acknowledgement](#)